DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 426 716 JC 990 021

AUTHOR	Grede, John F.
TITLE	Final Observations on Collective Bargaining.
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	7p.; For other "Collective Bargaining" papers, see JC 990 022 and ED 400 013.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Arbitration; *Collective Bargaining; *College Faculty; *Community Colleges; Educational History; *Faculty College Relationship; Grievance Procedures; Labor Relations; *Negotiation Impasses; Teacher Strikes; *Teaching Load; Two Year Colleges; *Unions
IDENTIFIERS	City Colleges of Chicago IL

ABSTRACT

This document recounts the events, from the administration's point of view, leading to the inception of collective bargaining between the City Colleges of Chicago and the Cook County College Teachers Union in 1967. In this account, Chancellor Shabat recalls the critical closing moments of the negotiations during the spring of 1967. For some time prior to the contract signing, the union and the board were at an impasse over college teaching load, historically 15 contact hours per week. The demand by the union for a twelve-contact-hour teaching load had no real basis in practice among community colleges and was consistently rejected until enough pressure forced the chancellor to concede. Some of the widespread ramifications caused by this change include overwhelming staff-hiring responsibilities, increased student expenses (especially tuition), and the decision by many teachers to take on second jobs once their hours were cut. Since the late 1960's, only 600 of the former 1,350 full time faculty remain. Sixty percent of the teaching faculty are now part-time, and faculty tenure has been eliminated and replaced by employment contracts. Overall, faculty are receiving more pay for less work, and their perceptions of collective bargaining are positive, while the administration tends to see the process as an invasion of its assigned role. (AS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 426 716

Final Observations on Collective Bargaining

John F. Grede

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
J. F. Grede
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

JC 990 021

FINAL OBSERVATIONS ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Collective bargaining between the City Colleges of Chicago and the Cook County College Teachers Union began some 32 years ago. Relatively little has been written about this landmark event that opened a new era not only for the City Colleges of Chicago but for community colleges generally. Some collective bargaining had occurred previously but the sheer magnitude of the City Colleges involvement, spreading soon to encompass the surrounding community colleges in northeastern Illinois, was virtually unparalleled. Only in the last year (1998) have critical elements in those negotiations come to light in the recollections of Chancellor Shabat, the chief administrator of the City Colleges during the 1960's when the old order changed irrevocably and a new one emerged. On May 7, 1967, the first collective bargaining contract was signed between the Cook County College Teachers Union ani what was then the Chicago City College.

The account presented here is essentially the college administration view of the 1967 events. It is based on Chancellor Shabat's vivid recollections of the critical closing events of the negotiations during the Spring of 1967 most of which took plaqe in Mayor Daley's office. For some time prior to the contract signing, the Union and the Board were at an impasse over college teaching load, historically 15 contact hours per week. For years this was based on the common school system from which the community college in Chicago emerged. Some variations were common as in the case of laboratory-type courses where more contact hours were required.

The Union demand for a 12 contact hour teaching load had no real basis in practice among community (formerly junior) colleges. The only real

pressure came from a few members of the English departments who believed their jobs of correcting student themes was onerous. The Union demand was presented over and over again to the Board's regular negotiating team during early 1967. The Board's negotiating team, supported by the Chancellor and Board members, consistently rejected the Union demand as extremely expensive, and completely unjustified by community college practice at the time.

Late in April, and totally unknown to the Board negotiating team, the Chancellor was contacted by the Mayor's office and asked to come to his office for a meeting. According to Chancellor Shabat's account, the Mayor, beset by an ongoing public school teachers strike, and logically hoping to avoid a simultaneous college teachers strike, wanted a resolution of the impasse at the college level. The Union, represented by President Swenson, and assisted by William Lee, AFL/CIO representative, pressed for the 12 hour teaching load. The Chancellor, with only nominal support from one of his Board members who took no active role, resisted. With the Mayor moving from one group to the other and pressing for settlement and with Bill Lee urging agreement, the Chancellor felt obliged to concede what his negotiating team had consistently refused.

The action was communicated to the surprised Board negotiating team which subsequently was disbanded. The net effect of the concession of the 12 hour teaching load remained unprecedented insofar as its impact on the City Colleges.

The approval of a 12 contact hour teaching load for all faculty, not just certain English Department members, had serious and widespread ramifications down to the present. Since the contract providing for the reduction in teaching

load was completed in the Spring of 1967 there was created the virtually overwhelming task of hiring new staff for the next regular session of the colleges which would be in the Fall of the same year. Our estimate was that some 200 new faculty members would have to be hired to cover the programmed classes. A conservative estimate placed the cost at about $3,000.000 per year to begin. As it turned out in the relatively tight market for teachers at the time, the full complement was not available when needed and consequently a good part of the scheduled classes ended up being covered by the regular faculty on an overtime basis. Thus a number of the existing faculty got 20% additional pay for classes that previously would have been part of their regular teaching load. There is also some question as to the reliability of the selection process when such a large number of new faculty had to be sought in a relatively short time.

Beyond the immediate events and of particular concern to students was the effect of increased expense for a publicly-supported institution created during the Great Depression to provide quality post-secondary education for a sizeable segment of Chicago population unable to afford the expense of traditional higher education. A very significant factor in tuition increase from an early $6 per credit hour to $50 has been the large increase in faculty compensation.

Perhaps more significant than increased cost was the apparent effect of the decreased teaching load on faculty. Teaching for the City Colleges saw much evidence now of being regarded as a part-time job which entailed little more than meeting classes for 12 hours per week. Often this encouraged

teachers to seek a second job, a practice particularly evident in departments of business in the various colleges. With little or no pressure for research, publications, or attendance at professional meetings there was now more time for a second job.

Over the 32 years since collective bargaining began in the City Colleges a few events stand out. The Chancellor recalled that there were six strikes during that period. On one occasion Norman Swenson, the union president, was fined $6000 and sent to jail by Judge Covelli for violation of a court order. Chancellor Shabat visited Swenson in jail and then went to Judge Covelli to seek Swenson's release so as not to enhance the Union leader's role as a martyr for his cause. The Chancellor noted that over the years the faculty, the real heart of an educational institution, have changed from some 1350 full time members in the late 1960's to about 600 presently. Sixty percent of the teaching faculty are now part-time. Faculty tenure has been eliminated and replaced by employment contracts.

The educational program itself appears to have been affected by the growth of collective bargaining. The historic mission of the City Colleges was to provide the first two years of college work inexpensively and close to home. With the coming of Federal funding in the 1960's, new programs to prepare people for occupations rather than senior college began to emerge. The union contracts, largely drafted and supported by the old liberal arts oriented faculty, were slow to recognize practical job experience in placing new faculty on salary lanes and steps. Academic degrees continued

to be the critical criteria with work experience other than teaching getting little recognition. Although the passage of time has brought change, the initial reluctance to recognize academic degrees and teaching experience as one criterion for hiring and salary placement rather than the criterion, slowed considerably the emergence of occupational programs.

In summary, the impact of collective bargaining on the City Colleges of Chicago is difficult to assess. Faculty generally have received more pay for less work. Their perception of collective bargaining is a positive one, in general. Administration often sees collective bargaining as an invasion of its assigned role but devoid of responsibility. The ever-present grievance structure encourages timidity as well as taking up inordinate amounts of time. The bottom line, however, is that collective bargaining appears here to stay. Someone has defined it as "antagonistic cooperation". Let us hope it is more cooperative than antagonistic.